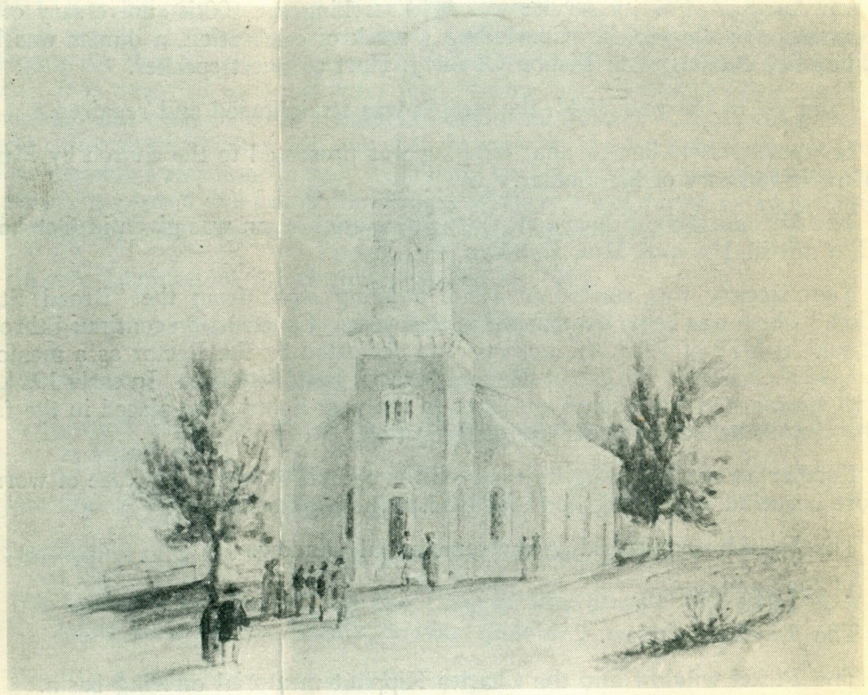


EARLY CHURCH BUILDING

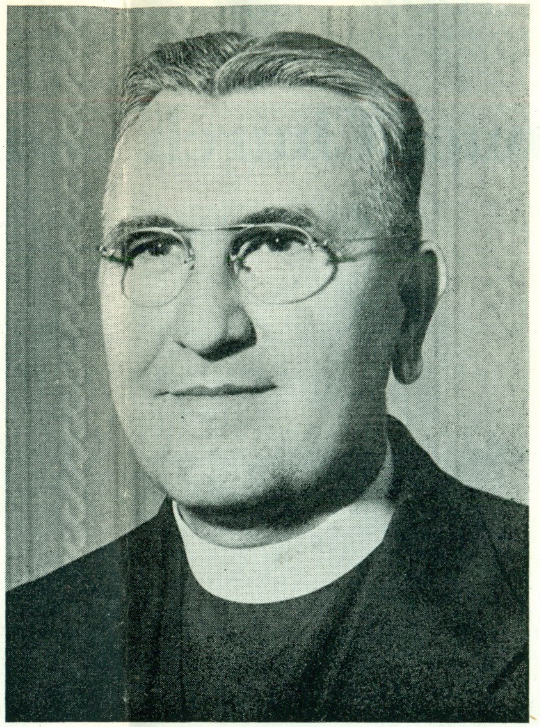
100th Anniversary

Emmanuel Church Building

Holmesburg

Rev. Henry E. Kaufmann, Rector

1858 - 1958



OUR HERITAGE

One of our human failures is to take things for granted. How many give consideration to the thought and effort that has been expended in discovering and developing the variety of facilities which help to make our lives more comfortable. Civilization and culture did not come only by our efforts. Many generations before us have struggled to achieve what we now possess. We should not take it for granted, but endeavor to preserve and improve it.

"Centennial Sunday" marks the 100th anniversary of the building of our church. It is a reminder to the Congregation of its particular heritage. The faith, work and generosity of men and women of previous generations have made possible much of what we now have—especially our beautiful church. Upon entrance within its portals, one cannot help but feel that truly it is the House of the Lord. During the century of it existence many are those who, within its walls, have received spiritual guidance, inspiration, comfort and Christian Fellowship.

Let us always be conscious of our heritage. Our thankfulness for what we are now privileged to use and enjoy can best be expressed by our work and gifts to preserve and expand what has been given to us. May God bless and strengthen us in this endeavor!

HENRY E. KAUFMANN,
Rector.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR LOYALTY CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Dear Friends:

The end of our Loyalty Campaign has been reached, and as we pause to survey the results of that campaign we remember all those who have given generously of their worldly goods, and in thus giving have demonstrated to themselves their loyalty and gratitude to God's Church. Certainly much is owed by all of us to the church; and much has been generously given.

We remember that the pledges of the congregation were a personal and voluntary effort, loyally made, as the needs of the church were brought to the attention of its friends. Faith and enthusiasm are the roots of this generosity, and the fruits should be a deepening of Christian experience.

The members of the Loyalty Committee wish to thank all who have helped in this campaign. Thanks also to the Vestry of Emmanuel Church for its generous cooperation and financial aid, and finally thanks to all those members of the congregation and all other friends of Emmanuel Church whose generosity has led to a successful conclusion.

HISTORY OF EMMANUEL CHURCH

On March 10, 1787, three churches, Trinity and All Saints in Philadelphia, and St. Thomas in Whitemarsh, became associated in the same charter of incorporation. They so continued until 1835 when they became three separate corporations. During that association, in 1831, we note that a plot of ground, the gift of Miss Hannah Lardner, was conveyed in trust to All Saints Church. It is recorded that the lot was situated on that turnpike road, over which marched Washington's troops on their way to Yorktown. We find also that the lot was located close to the Pennypack, whose naural beauties rival that of the famed Wissahickon, and that it was near the old mill where the early Welsh and Swedish settlers brought their grain to be ground. It is the lot on which the present church edifice stands, and it was here, largely through the efforts of Rev. George Sheets, Rector of Trinity and All Saints, that the original chapel was built. It was consecrated on January 30, 1832.

Twelve years after the establishment of the mission, the little band of faithful worshippers of Emmanuel Chapel emerged from their dependency and became an independent parish. The first Congregational Meeting was held on February 12, 1844, when the first Vestry of six men was elected. After making the necessary arrangements with All Saints Church, a joint memorial was presented to the State Legislature, and on April 9, 1844, the act of incorporation was signed by the Governor. Thus, our Parish was established with the legal title of—"The Rector, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of Emmanuel Church, Holmesburg, in the County of Philadelphia." It was not until May 27, 1844, that a Rector was selected. The Rev. William H. Bourns, unanimously elected, accepted the Charge on May 31st. The advent of Mr. Bourns marked a new era for the congregation, and the struggles so necessary in the formation of a new parish, were relieved to a large extent by his wise counsel and guidance. Declining health caused the resignation of Mr. Bourns on October 2, 1848.

Mr. Bourns was succeeded by Rev. George G. Field elected the following month. Mr. Field served until April 13, 1857, and during his rectorship, church enlargement continued and the erection of a new church was assured. A new Sunday School building was completed in 1849, and in 1851 a member of the Congregation had erected, at her own expense, an addition to this building. A bell was placed in the tower and a new organ purchased in 1850.

The church was without a Rector from April, 1857, to November of that year, when Rev. John P. Lundy was elected. While the parish pulpit was vacant, however, the Vestry made rapid strides in furnishing a new church for the congregation and on September 21, 1857, the corner stone was laid. When completed, it was opened for service on Sunday, July 4, 1858, with a patriotic sermon delivered by Dr. Lundy. On July 7th, the sacrament of baptism was administered for the first time in the new edifice, the person being the infant son of Presley and Sarah M. Blakiston. The first marriage was that of Elias Chase and Malvina Susan James on July 15, 1858. Consecration of the building took place December 16, 1858, with the Rt. Rev. Samuel Bowman, Assistant Bishop, officiating. Also, at that service, a class of 13 was confirmed. Dr. Lundy was Rector for only six years, when his resignation was regretfully accepted.

Dr. Lundy was followed by the Rev. D. Caldwell Millett, D. D., who came here well fortified to bear up under the burdens of a parish. These burdens are never light, and how well they were borne, is testified by his 30 years service here as Rector. He could recall having baptized children in their infancy, later presenting them for confirmation, marrying them and baptizing their offspring. During his Rectorship, a mission was started in Tacony and on September 29, 1868, the cornerstone of Holy Innocents church was laid. Dr. Millett continued supervision there until the Parish was well established, resigning those duties in 1871.

A parish school had been established back in 1851 for girls and boys "to combine the religious teaching of the church with the ordinary instruction of schools." That school, however, was discontinued in 1854, and not until 1872, was there sufficient enthusiasm shown to reorganize it. A committee was then organized by the ladies under the title of "The Parish School Fund Association." A bazaar was held and nearly $1000 realized toward a building fund. The money was destined instead to be used in supporting the Parish School, as in August 1878, Miss Eliza J. Brown offered to erect at her own expense a parish building for church purposes. The building, a memorial to Miss Mary D. Brown, was completed in November, 1879. It housed for many years our Sunday School and the reorganized Parish School. The latter continued its good work until 1916. The Sunday School subsequently required more ample quarters, but the younger classes still use the building as do also several societies for their meetings. The main portion of the building is now our Chapel. The Joseph E. Temple Memorial, which is the present Rectory at Frankford Avenue and Decatur Street, was also built during the rectorship of Dr. Millett. It was made possible through funds received from the Temple Estate and was completed in 1889.

The weight of years and increasing infirmities caused Dr. Millett to resign October 1, 1894. The Vestry, recognizing the value of his services, conferred upon him the title of Rector Emeritus. The committee on supplies engaged the Rev. Arnold Harris Hord for Sunday, October 7, 1894, and so impressed was the congregation that they felt a call should be extended to him. He was already considering a call to Newark which had to be answered during that week, and the ordinances of our church did not permit the election of a Rector until two weeks after the nomination. The Vestry, however, held an informal meeting and pledged themselves to vote for his election as soon as the legal time arrived. Mr. Hord recognized this as a unanimous call and accepted it as such. On October 23, 1894, he was officially elected, and by special invitation, attended the Vestry meeting at which the action was taken, and immediately took his seat as presiding officer and assumed his duties as Rector. The Vestry made no mistake by their hasty action, as during his years in Holmesburg, Mr. Hord endeared himself to the congregation and when he resigned to enter a field of larger usefulness on January 1, 1901, it was with a feeling of reluctance that his resignation was accepted.

In July 1899, Mr. Hord suggested a change in the musical service of the church and the organization of a vested choir of men and boys. This would require alterations to the chancel. The chancel was enlarged and a new robing room built, being completed in 1900. This was made possible, and presented to the church, through the efforts of the Ladies of the Choir Guild and the generosity of Miss Eliza J. Brown.

We find an item of interest in the establishment of a boundary line for Parish missionary work. This came about apparently as a result of a dispute with All Saints Church, and we find that in May, 1899, the boundary was defined as beginning at Delaware River and Cottman Street, and extending to Bustleton Turnpike, to Axefactory Road, to Willets Road, to Bristol Turnpike, thence by an imaginary straight line parallel to Eleven Mile Lane or Linden Avenue and extending to the River.

In 1898, we find an item, and we mention it here as a sidelight of the times. A notice was posted on the front gate, announcing the hours of worship, in order that the many visitors, arriving in the village each Sunday, on bicycles and electric cars, might have an opportunity to attend divine services.

Mr. Hord resigned January 1, 1901, to take a new charge at the Church of St. Michael and All Angels in Germantown. A beautiful baptismal ewer and shelf was presented by St. Martha's Guild at the Easter service in 1901, as a testimonial to Mr. Hord.

In March, 1901, the Rev. Robert A. Tufft was elected Rector and his first service here was on the following Easter Sunday.

In April, 1902, a memorial altar in honor of Dr. Millett was suggested and thus the white marble altar placed in the chancel, being completed in 1903. The former altar was presented to St. George's Chapel on East Venango Street. This followed the custom established in Mr. Hord's time of finding a place of usefulness for several items from our church when new gifts had been presented to Emmanuel. A few examples: The Chancel Window, also to St. George's in 1895; the Chancel Rail to Holy Innocents in 1897 and the Pulpit to a church in Maryland in 1898.

The all male choir was changed to one of mixed voices about 1903, and the present pipe organ was installed in 1906. While Mr. Tufft was Rector, in 1907, the envelope system for church offerings was installed. This was a new custom for Emmanuel Church, as up until that time the bulk of revenue came from Pew Rents. The custom of renting a family pew was of long standing and has much merit, but today there are relatively few churches with rented pews. Emmanuel still has a small number, but each year the income from this source grows less, and the bulk of our offerings are now obtained through the envelope system. In October 1910, Rev. Tufft resigned to accept a call to the Church of Ascension in Bradford, McKean County, Pa.

Following Mr. Tufft, and assuming his duties at the Easter service on April 16, 1911, Rev. Sydney Goodman became the seventh Rector of Emmanuel Church. He spent nearly 20 years with Emmanuel, and many will remember his manner of conducting the church services, always in full accord with their solemn and spiritual beauty. It is recorded in the minutes that "during Mr. Goodman's long service—Holmesburg has changed from a small old fashioned country village into a modern suburban district of Philadelphia, and that through his earnest efforts the congregation has increased very considerably." During his incumbency, the church property was greatly improved and nearly the whole cost thereof was raised by contributions obtained through his efforts. Among these improvement, we list:

Electric Lighting of the church, installed in 1913.

New carpet for the whole floor of the church, and an altar rug.

Installation of a stained glass window in 1915.

Acquisition of the lot, at corner of Frankford Avenue and Stanwood Street, in March, 1921.

Erection of Emmanuel House, completed in May, 1924.

Installation of a central heating plant for hall and church.

The beautiful new window in the Chancel—the Brown Memorial in 1917, being dedicated on Trinity Sunday, June 4.

The Weed memorial Cross atop the steeple.

On May 28, 1915, Mr. Tage Teisen, a lay reader of our church was ordained a deacon, being the first member of our Parish to enter Holy Orders. At the present time, the Rev. Dr. Teisen is Rector of Bethesda by-the-Sea in Palm Beach, Florida. The Church of the Resurrection, in Mayfair, which started as St. Matthew's Mission, owes its early development to the earnest efforts of Mr. Goodman. On March 1, 1931, Mr. Goodman resigned to take charge at the church of Saint John the Baptist, in Germantown.

The eighth Rector, Rev. I. E. Brooks, then of Grace Church, Hulmeville, was elected on June 18, 1931, to take charge August 1st of that year. Under Mr. Brook's leadership a junior Choir was organized. Mr. Brooks, mainly through his own handicraft, and with the artistic help of Mr. Lewis Carr, converted the central wing of the Parish House into a Chapel, which was named and consecrated "St. Mary's Chapel" by Bishop Tait in 1934. On Easter Day, March 24, 1940, Mr. Brooks resigned after nearly nine years as Rector. He was followed by our present Rector, the Rev. Henry E. Kaufmann elected June 20, 1940 and assuming charge September 1, 1940.

Since then, the physical property of the church has been improved and several items of note have been accomplished. Among these are:

Renovation of Emmanuel House Kitchen

New Stone Wall and concrete pavement and entrance steps to the church.

Rebuilding of the church organ.

Enlargement of Church Burial Ground.

Installation of new interior electric lighting and exterior fixtures.

Further temporal accomplishments were noted as to the repair and upkeep of the church edifice during the following years.

On April 23, 1944, a service was held marking the 100th anniversary of the independence of the parish. Concluding a week of celebration, a dinner was held on Thursday evening with Bishop Oliver J. Hart as guest speaker.

Later on in the year 1944, the steeple was straightened and repaired.

In January 1945, a new altar hanging was presented to the church by Murrel Dobbins in memory of his mother.

The Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Curtis memorial organ was given in October of 1952, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin K. Lynam.

The Sacristy was started in 1952, utilizing stone from the "Broad Street Station," which was being demolished in that year. Construction continued through 1952 and in May of 1953, the sacristy was dedicated by the Rector as a memorial to Louisa K. Schaefer, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. C. John Birkman. In early 1954, the church steeple was illuminated and later in the year lights were placed in the front of the church by donors from the congregation.

Further memorials and gifts enriched the church to make our place of worship a more beautiful and fitting house of God. These gifts include:

The French and World War II memorial window.

The Frost window.

The Twelves window.

The Pickel window and the Charles Kipphut memorial offering basin.

In 1956 extensive renovation of the Chapel was started to add to the capacity of our Sunday School Classrooms. Funds for this important addition were realized by contributions of the congregation over a two year period. A new rug and renovation of the church interior followed in 1957.

The Rector celebrated his 25th anniversary in the ministry and his 15th year at Emmanuel in April, 1956, with a reception in Emmanuel house, which was attended by the Bishop. Mr. Kaufmann was presented with his portrait in oils by the congregation.

In 1958, another memorial window, the Birkman window, was given. The latest addition to Emmanuel is the McLaughlin memorial gates at the communion rail.

The many changes in Emmanuel over these 100 years would surely indicate an attitude of pride in our church building. Steady growth in both Church school and Church attendance shows that Emmanuel is serving the needs of the community with ever increasing vigor and spiritual effort under the grace of God and leadership of our present rector Rev. Henry E. Kaufmann.